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United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Office of  
Public Affairs

# **Selected Speeches and News Releases**

**April 5 - April 12, 1990**

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# Statement

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

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## Joint Statement by Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration and U.S. Department of Agriculture, April 11.

The Environmental Protection Agency, the Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture commend Rhone-Poulenc Ag Company for voluntarily ceasing the sale and recalling the stocks of the pesticide aldicarb for use on potatoes due to recent data which indicate that the allowable residue level was exceeded on potatoes in isolated cases. The action taken today is a cautious measure to ensure the safety of our food supply.

Consumers should not be alarmed and they should continue their normal consumption of potatoes. The company is taking this action after recently finding that the allowable residue level was exceeded in ten individual potatoes among approximately three hundred that were tested following a request for data from the EPA.

In the seventeen years aldicarb has been used, there are no reports of illness from eating aldicarb-treated potatoes. At the highest levels found in a few potatoes, aldicarb could cause flu-like symptoms such as nausea, headache and blurred vision which disappear quickly.

EPA will continue to review and monitor this situation and take any further action if necessary.

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# News Releases

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## NOMINATIONS TO BE SOUGHT FOR NATIONAL WATERMELON BOARD IN SOUTH FLORIDA

WASHINGTON, April 5—Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Jo Ann R. Smith today announced that the initial convention to nominate members for a National Watermelon Board will be held by the South Florida watermelon handlers and growers in Tampa, April 6.

Smith said USDA will oversee similar nominating conventions in the six other districts in the United States that comprise the constituency of the national watermelon research and promotion plan. Watermelon producers approved the plan in a national referendum in February 1989.

Smith particularly encouraged women, minorities and the handicapped who qualify as watermelon producers and handlers in the district to attend the convention and to run for nomination. "In this country, and in the agricultural industry, diversity is strength," she said.

Growers of five or more acres of watermelons below Florida State Highway 50 (watermelon program District 1) and all handlers of watermelons residing in the area are eligible to vote and to run for nomination to the board. Two grower and two handler board members will be appointed from the list of nominees originating at the convention. Appointees will serve three year terms beginning Jan. 1, 1991, and ending Dec. 31, 1993.

Authorized by the 1985 Watermelon Research and Promotion Act, the watermelon board administers an industry-funded national research and promotion program designed to increase consumption of U.S. watermelons. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service monitors the program.

The convention will start at 10 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Sabal Park Hotel, 10315 E. Buffalo Ave., Tampa, Fla.

For additional information, contact Richard H. Mathews, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS,

USDA, Rm. 2529-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456,  
telephone (202) 447-4140.

George Clarke (202) 447-8998

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## **USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON**

WASHINGTON, April 5—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, April 6, through midnight Thursday, April 12.

Since the adjusted world price (AWP) is above the 1988 and 1989 crop base quality loan rates of 51.80 and 50.00 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1988 and 1989 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates for the specific quality and location.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments are not available for 1989-crop upland cotton sold during this period.

Based on data for the week ending April 5, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

*Chart follows on next page.*

Adjusted World Price	
Northern Europe Price .....	82.08
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location .....	13.07
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton .....	2.20
Average U.S. location .....	0.39
Sum of Adjustments .....	<u>-15.66</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE .....	66.42 cents/lb.
Coarse Count Adjustment	
Northern Europe Price .....	82.08
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price .....	<u>-76.08</u>
	6.00
Adjustment to SLM 1-inch cotton .....	<u>-4.75</u>
	-0.25
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT .....	0 cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on April 12.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

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## FGIS PROPOSES REVISING FEE STRUCTURE FOR AFLATOXIN, FALLING NUMBER TESTS

WASHINGTON, April 5—The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Federal Grain Inspection Service has proposed revising fees and establishing a separate hourly rate for official aflatoxin and falling number tests on grain performed at the point of service.

FGIS also proposes to establish a unit fee for the use of an aflatoxin test kit at the point of service, and to increase fees assessed by FGIS’ Beltsville, Md., laboratory and other field laboratories for performing aflatoxin tests with kits or by the minicolumn method.

David Galliard, acting FGIS administrator, said that foreign buyers are increasingly requesting aflatoxin and falling numbers tests, and that exporters are requesting that results be determined at the points of service to eliminate delays caused by mailing samples to the FGIS Beltsville laboratory.



FGIS' current fee schedule for the tests is not covering the costs of the services, Galliard said.

The proposed fee structure was published March 30 in the Federal Register. Written comments may be submitted on or before April 29 to Paul D. Marsden, Federal Grain Inspection Service, USDA, Room 0628-S, Box 96454, Washington, D.C. 20090-6454. Telecopiers users may send responses to the FGIS automatic telecopier machine at (202) 447-4628.

Allen Atwood (202) 475-3367

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## **FOOD STAMP RECIPIENTS CAN PROFIT FROM NEW MINIMUM WAGE LAW**

WASHINGTON, April 5—Food stamp recipients will come out substantially ahead under the new minimum wage law, although the new higher wage may lead to some reduction in benefits, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

“Every case is different, but most food stamp recipients will keep at least 64 cents in benefits for each dollar they gain in wages,” said Catherine Bertini, assistant secretary of agriculture for food and consumer services.

Bertini said the food stamp program ensures that people will be better off when they get a raise or a better job, even if they lose some food stamp benefits.

“The food stamp program is not an alternative to work. We want to encourage people to work, earn money and support themselves and their families,” Bertini said.

The federal minimum wage rose from \$3.35 to \$3.80 an hour on April 1, and will rise again to \$4.25 on April 1 next year.

Food stamp benefits are calculated on the basis of several factors, including household size and net income as determined by deducting expenses for such things as housing, utilities and day care.

Bertini cited as an example a family of three who claim the maximum deduction for housing, earn \$580 a month in wages and receive \$207 in food stamps. Under the new minimum wage law, their earnings would increase by \$78 to \$658, while food stamp benefits would be reduced by only \$19.

“That’s a total of \$787 a month under the old minimum wage, and \$846 under the new, for a net gain of \$67,” she said. “The gain in wages more than makes up for the loss in food stamps. In fact, for each new dollar earned with the new minimum wage, this household would keep 76 cents in food stamp benefits.”

Phil Shanholtzer (703) 756-3286

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## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES CAN NOW TASTE BETTER AND LAST LONGER

WASHINGTON, April 6—A U.S. Department of Agriculture chemist has developed an edible, inexpensive film that can be easily applied to fresh fruit and vegetables to retard ripening.

“The coating extends the shelf life of produce without harming quality and allows it to be stored at 70 degrees F, normal room temperature,” said Myrna NisperosCarriedo, a chemist with USDA’s Agricultural Research Service.

She reported that the base for the coating is commercially available oils or waxes and cellulose. “But we added an emulsifier that the commercial blends don’t have,” she said. An emulsifier keeps oil globules dispersed in water.

At the ARS Citrus and Subtropical Products Research Laboratory in Winter Haven, Fla., Nisperos-Carriedo found that the vegetable oil-emulsifier film successfully treated tomatoes, oranges, and carambolas.

After 14 days of storage, only 40 percent of tomatoes treated with the emulsified film began ripening, compared to almost 100 percent of tomatoes without the coating, she said.

Without the emulsifier, she found that about 80 percent of the tomatoes treated with a commercially available coating started to ripen.

“The tomatoes treated with our film also had better color and less fungal growth,” she reported.

Nisperos-Carriedo made a surprising discovery when she tested the coating on mature pineapple oranges. After eight to 10 days in storage at 70 degrees F, juice extracted from coated oranges contained up to 14 times more of the usual flavor volatiles. “Volatile esters, fragrant compounds formed by the chemical combination of an acid and an alcohol, give orange juice its ‘fruity’ taste,” she said.



Fragile carambola—Florida-grown star fruit—turns an unsightly brown and shows fungal growth after about three days in normal storage. But, treated with the emulsified film, the exotic fruit held up well even after eight days of storage.

Milton T. Ouye, ARS national program leader for product losses, says fresh fruit and vegetables suffer anywhere from 12 to 20 percent spoilage loss from farm gate to retail outlets. “We expect the fresh fruit and vegetable industry to be very interested in the results of this research,” he said.

Nisperos-Carriedo plans to patent the emulsified film.

Doris Sanchez (301) 344-2767

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## **USDA INCREASES FEES FOR EGG, POULTRY AND RABBIT GRADING**

WASHINGTON, April 6—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will increase fees for certain grading and inspection services for eggs, poultry and rabbits, effective May 1.

“Increases in the salaries and fringe benefits of federal employees and of federally licensed state employees providing the services justify raising the fees,” said Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service, which administers the grading program.

Hourly fees for voluntary, industry-requested grading will rise from \$17.80 to \$19.68 for resident service (work of a grader with a regular tour of duty at a plant); from \$24.12 to \$27.28 for non-resident service (intermittent, “as-needed,” grading); and from \$25.92 to \$27.36 for nonresident grading work on weekends and holidays.

The administrative fee for the cost of USDA supervision of voluntary grading and for other overhead expenses will rise from \$.027 to \$.029 per case of shell eggs and from \$.00027 to \$.00029 per pound of poultry in plants using the resident grading program. The minimum administrative fee for poultry and eggs per billing period will rise from \$135 to \$145, and the maximum fee will rise from \$1,350 to \$1,450. The minimum administrative fee for grading rabbits will rise from \$135 to \$145 per billing period.

Grading services administered by USDA are made available upon request from interested parties and paid for by the users. The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 requires user fees to be reasonable and, as nearly as possible, equal to the cost of the services. Current fees have been in effect since June 1989.

USDA also will raise hourly fees for special inspection services in egg products plants. Increases are from \$20.52 to \$21.68 for overtime work, from \$14.20 to \$14.72 for holiday inspection work, and from \$20.28 to \$23.20 for processing appeals from inspectors' decisions. The 1970 Egg Products Inspection Act requires that costs of services other than basic inspection during normal 40-hour week be paid by the user. These special inspection fees were last increased in May 1987.

The grading and inspection fee increases will be published as a final rule in the April 10 Federal Register. Copies are available from Janice L. Lockard, Chief, Standardization Branch, Poultry Division, AMS, USDA, Room 3944-S, Post Office Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, telephone (202) 447-3506.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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## **USDA TO REGULATE FARM ANIMALS USED IN BIO-MEDICAL RESEARCH**

Washington, April 6—The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today its intent to clarify its role in the care of farm animals when used in nonagricultural research and nonagricultural exhibition, and horses when used in nonagricultural research, as part of the Animal Welfare Act. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is also inviting public comment on appropriate standards to adopt for regulating these animals.

The Animal Welfare Act authorizes the secretary of agriculture to oversee the humane handling, housing, care, treatment and transportation of warm-blooded animals used for research, testing, exhibition or sold wholesale as pets. APHIS will begin regulating the humane care of animals such as cattle, sheep, pigs and goats used for nonagricultural research or exhibition and of horses used in nonagricultural research on June 4.

“While animals such as dogs, cats, monkeys, guinea pigs and hamsters



are specified in the act as research subjects to be regulated, APHIS has the authority to regulate all warm-blooded research animals,” said James W. Glosser, APHIS administrator. “Given the increased use in research of horses and farm animals and the public concern for these animals, we intend to include them under the act, when they are used for nonagricultural research and nonagricultural exhibition.”

Following a 1987 proposal to revise animal welfare regulations, APHIS received more than 1,000 comments requesting that the agency include farm animals in its definition of “animal.”

Until standards are set up to address more directly the needs of horses and farm animals, they will be regulated as described in 9 CFR Part 3, Subpart F, which currently defines general standards for protecting those animals not covered in other sections, Glosser said.

Comments on the appropriate standards will be accepted if they are received on or before June 4. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket number 90-006 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md., 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Pat El-Hinnawy (301) 436-7253

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## **USDA PROPOSES FEE INCREASE FOR CITRUS ANALYSES**

WASHINGTON, April 6—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to increase by \$4 the hourly fee charged for laboratory analyses of fresh citrus juices and certain other citrus products performed by USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service.

AMS Administrator Daniel D. Haley said the increase covers the cost of laboratory services provided by the agency’s Commodities Scientific Support Division, which performs the citrus analyses. Major factors contributing to the need for the fee increase are increased costs of reagents (chemicals used in analysing substances) and instrumentation, four salary increases to federal employees over four years, and increased employee fringe benefits. The current fee is \$25 per hour.

Haley said AMS tests citrus on a fee-for-service basis. It provides a host of other sophisticated, fee-based laboratory testing services, and also conducts mandated testing for aflatoxin in peanuts and for chemical and microbiological residues in egg products, he said.

The proposed fee increase for citrus analyses will be published as a proposed rule in the April 10 Federal Register. Comments, postmarked no later than May 10, should be sent to the Director, Commodities Scientific Support Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 3064-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. Copies of the rule and additional information are available from that office, telephone (202) 447-5231.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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## **PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR USSR AND UNKNOWN**

WASHINGTON, Apr. 6—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture the following activity:

—Export sales of 750,000 metric tons of corn for delivery to the USSR during the 1989-90 marketing year and under the seventh year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement signed Aug. 25, 1983 and extended Nov. 28, 1988; and

—Purchases from foreign sellers of 175,000 tons of corn for delivery to unknown destinations during 1989-90. A purchase from a foreign seller is a transaction in which a U. S. exporter contracts to buy U. S. produced commodities from a foreign firm.

The marketing year for corn began Sept. 1.

Sales of wheat and corn to the USSR for delivery during the seventh year of the agreement (which began Oct. 1, 1989 and ends Sept. 30, 1990) total 14,705,900 tons, of which wheat is 2,810,000 tons and corn is 11,895,900 tons. Sales of soybeans total 288,400 tons and soybean meal total 1,407,000 tons. In addition, sales of barley total 7,300 tons. USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by



3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

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## WASPS' SHUTTLE LOVE TO FADE AWAY AT THE HAND OF USDA ENTOMOLOGIST

WASHINGTON—The shuttle launch pads at Kennedy Space Center have become a lover's lane for paper wasps, and a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist is helping NASA break up the love connection.

Every fall and winter for the past five years, wasps of the genus *Polistes* have been flying to the tops of the launch pads at Cape Canaveral to mate and over-winter, according to entomologist Peter J. Landolt of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. Paper wasps are the type found on the sides of many homes.

NASA officials, concerned for employee safety and the sensitive shuttle equipment, contacted Landolt for help in controlling the problem.

"We want to develop a baittrap system that will keep the wasps off the shuttle," said Landolt, who works at the ARS Insect Attractants, Behavior and Basic Biology Research Laboratory in Gainesville, Fla.

Chemical poisons aren't a good alternative, he said, partly because of concern for sensitive equipment and partly because the space center is located on a wildlife refuge.

Both male and female wasps emit sex chemicals, or pheromones, to attract each other. In the current issue of *Agricultural Research* magazine, Landolt and entomologist Hal C. Reed report that pheromone extracts from male wasps attract females as well as pheromones emitted from a live male.

Landolt said he will work with a chemist to reproduce those odors, which will be used to lure female wasps into a trap. Landolt estimates it will take about two years to develop the trapping system.

Paper wasps chew bark fibers into paper to make their nests, which are commonly found under bushes and—to the chagrin of many a homeowner—on the sides of houses.

In September, males normally leave those low nests and fly to the tops of trees and hilltops, Landolt said. Florida has relatively few hills, so the

males are flying to the high launch pad from up to a mile away. Thousands of males swarm there and alight on a protruding object such as a bolt. They rub their heads and tails on the perch to release sex odors, fighting each other for the most ideal spot to sit and wait for a female.

Nearby females, responding to both the sex scents in the air and the sight of the tall launch pad, also leave the nests and swarm to the top.

After couples mate, males die. Females cluster on a wall inside the launch pad's machinery room, or squeeze into one of its cracks and crevices. There, they "hibernate," surviving the winter on stored body fat. In the spring, they fly down to ground level to build nests and lay eggs.

The traps that Landolt hopes to develop would simulate the tall launch pad. A container with a small entry hole, baited with the males' scent, would draw females inside. This container could be put up high. NASA personnel could vacuum up unsuspecting females at night when they are inactive, or completely remove the trap from the site.

Another alternative, Landolt said, would be to build an intercepting trap—that is, a bait trap that would lure the females in and simply let them live there, preventing them from causing problems at the pad.

When Landolt completes the system, Disney World and two tourist towers in Florida would also like to take advantage of it, he said. Wasps also have been swarming to the top of Disney World's Gondola ride, which carries people over the park from one end to the other, and to the tops of Bok Tower in Lake Wales and Citrus Tower in Clermont.

Jessica Morrison Silva (301) 344-3927  
Issued April 9, 1990

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## **USDA ANNOUNCES PROGRAM DIFFERENTIALS FOR 1990-CROP COTTON**

WASHINGTON, April 9—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced schedules of differentials for the 1990 crops of upland and extra-long-staple (ELS) cotton. The schedules are used in making price support loans to farmers.



The same procedures used in 1989 were used to develop the 1990 schedules. The upland cotton procedures were recommended by a study committee, as required by the Agricultural Act of 1949.

The schedule of differentials are applicable to loan rates of 50.27 cents per pound for the base grade of upland cotton and 81.77 cents per pound for ELS cotton.

Loan rates for the base grade of upland cotton at each approved warehouse location will be issued later. Tables of upland and ELS cotton differentials and a schedule of loan rates for individual qualities of 1990 ELS cotton are available from the Cotton, Grains and Rice Price Support Division, Room 3630-S, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, USDA, Box 2415, Washington, D.C. 20013, or by calling Tom Fink (202)447-8701.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206.

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## **USDA DESIGNATES 30 ADDITIONAL COUNTIES IN SIX STATES FOR ELS COTTON PRODUCTION**

WASHINGTON, April 9—Thirty additional counties in Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and Texas have been designated as suitable for growing extra long staple (ELS) cotton during marketing year 1990, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, said producers in the newly-designated counties may now grow ELS cotton and eventually qualify for ELS program benefits.

Interest in growing ELS cotton in the United States outside of traditional production areas has increased in recent years because of strong foreign demand and attractive prices. A total of 90 counties have been designated as eligible to grow this cotton.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, defines ELS cotton for program purposes as any pure strain varieties of the *Barbadense* species, or hybrid thereof, of cotton that is grown in a county designated by CCC as suitable for the production of ELS cotton and that is ginned on a roller-type gin.

On February 13, an initial list of the counties designated as suitable for growing ELS cotton during marketing year 1990 was published in the Federal Register. The newly designated counties are: Alabama: Butler, Monroe; California: Tulare; Florida: Escambia, Santa Rosa; Georgia: Brooks, Early, Thomas; Mississippi: Carroll, DeSoto, Hinds, Holms, Humphreys, Issaquena, Lafayette, Leflore, Madison, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Warren, Washington, Yazoo; Texas: Borden, Cochran, Dawson, Hockley, Lynn, Terry, Yoakum.

A complete list of designated ELS counties will appear in the Federal Register at a later date.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

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## PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR USSR

WASHINGTON, April 9—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 824,632 metric tons of corn for delivery to the USSR during the 1989-90 marketing year and under the seventh year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement signed Aug. 25, 1983 and extended Nov. 28, 1988. Of this quantity, 603,632 tons are new export sales and 221,000 tons are changes in destination from unknown to the USSR.

The marketing year for corn began Sept. 1.

Sales of wheat and corn to the USSR for delivery during the seventh year of the agreement (which began Oct. 1, 1989 and ends Sept. 30, 1990) total 15,530,500 tons, of which wheat is 2,810,000 tons and corn is 12,720,500 tons. Sales of soybeans total 288,400 tons and soybean meal total 1,407,000 tons. In addition, sales of barley total 7,300 tons.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

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## **USDA PROPOSES RULE TO REDUCE TIME FOR FILING CLAIMS ON SURETY BONDS**

WASHINGTON, April 10—A U.S. Department of Agriculture official today announced proposed changes in rules to reduce the time for filing claims on surety bonds and equivalents, posted by packers, market agencies and dealers under the Packers and Stockyards Act, and to reduce the waiting period for filing suit against the surety or trustee.

“We propose to reduce the time for filing claims on surety bonds and equivalents from 120 days to 60 days, and to reduce the waiting period for bringing suit on them from 180 days to 120 days, to enable claims to be paid more quickly,” said Virgil M. Rosendale, administrator of USDA’s Packers and Stockyards Administration.

Rosendale said that industry trade organizations have requested a shorter filing period to reduce the waiting period necessary before uncontested claims can be paid or suit on contested claims can begin.

P&SA also proposes to consolidate Section 201.35 of its regulations governing letters of credit, with other regulations governing surety bonds and equivalents.

The proposal will be open for public comment until June 11. Comments may be mailed to the Administrator, Packers and Stockyards Administration, USDA, Room 3039-S, 14th and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250.

Comments will be available for inspection by the public during normal business hours and copies of the proposed amendments may be obtained from the administrator’s office.

The proposal is scheduled to appear in the April 12 Federal Register.

Sara Wright (202) 382-9528

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## **USDA EXTENDS COMMENT PERIOD ON REGULATIONS TO CONTROL SALMONELLA IN POULTRY**

WASHINGTON, April 10—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is extending through May 2 the comment period for its recent regulations establishing a control program for *Salmonella enteritidis* (serotype enteritidis) in U.S. table-egg poultry flocks. The original deadline for comments was April 17.

“We are extending the comment period to allow the industry and others more time to evaluate the regulations” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Under the regulations, which became effective upon publication in the Feb. 16 Federal Register, interstate movement of chickens, eggs and associated articles from flocks infected or associated with *S. enteritidis* will be restricted, and all egg production breeding flocks must be classified “U.S. Sanitation Monitored” under the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP), or meet the requirements of an equivalent state program, in order to move interstate.

“*Salmonella enteritidis* (SE) is a growing problem for the egg industry and is a public health concern as well,” Glosser said. “This program is designed to control SE in table eggs from two fronts: testing and certification of the breeding flocks that produce table-egg layers, and tracebacks and testing of commercial table-egg layer flocks if and when they are implicated in *S. enteritidis* outbreaks in humans.”

In humans, the *Salmonella* bacteria can cause cramps, diarrhea, fever, and sometimes nausea and vomiting 5 to 72 hours after eating contaminated food. Some individuals, such as the elderly or those with weakened immune systems, can suffer serious and life-threatening effects from eating *Salmonella*-contaminated foods.

Notice of the extension period for comments was published in the April 5 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before May 2. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket number 88-161 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Room 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Margaret Webb (301) 436-6573

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## MULTICOLORED EASTER LILIES BLOOM YEAR ROUND

WASHINGTON—U.S. consumers soon may enjoy Easter and Asiatic hybrid lilies year round and at less cost, thanks to a new temperature treatment developed by a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

“Our treatment brings a lily from a very small bulb to bloom in about 280 days instead of two to three years,” said Mark S. Roh, a horticulturist with USDA’s Agricultural Research Service. “And in living colors, not just traditional white.”

Conventional lily production that takes up to three years leaves bulbs more vulnerable to disease, insect infestation and summer sprouting that can lower bulb and plant quality.

“The new treatment bypasses the field phase of lily production altogether,” Roh said. Controlled growth in the greenhouse reduces or eliminates major threats such as viruses and soilborne fungal diseases that now plague lily growth in the field.

“We have nine varieties of lilies that we’ve brought to bloom using this procedure,” Roh said. “These varieties produce two to four brilliant red, creamy yellow, and bright lavender lilies on strong, 12- to 25-inch stems for pot plants or cut flowers.”

Roh explained his new process: He harvests bulbils—tiny bulbs that appear after flowering on the stem of the plant where the leaves attach—and subjects them to low-high-low temperature treatments before potting.

“It’s the sequential temperature changes that force the plant to flower in such a short time,” Roh commented. He has applied for a patent for the treatment.

At the ARS Florist and Nursery Crops Laboratory in Beltsville, Md., Roh starts with the naturally forming bulbils. He keeps the bulbils packed in moist peat moss and subjects them to alternating temperatures. Then he pots them in a soil-peat-perlite mixture in 4- or 5-inch pots, maintaining a 80-to-90 degrees F temperature during the day, and a 70-80 degrees F temperature at night. After about three months on this schedule, Roh drops the temperature back down at the first sign of shoot formation. Time from shoot emergence to flowering is about 100 days.

Roh’s first experimental lily bulbs, no bigger than peas, came from Korea in 1981. He has been researching the temperature procedure on hybrids from these bulbs since 1983. His varieties include both Easter lilies (*Lilium longiflorum*) and Asiatic hybrid lilies (*Lilium elegans*).

Although not all commercial hybrid lilies produce bulbils naturally, Roh said his nine new varieties do. He plans to formally release his hybrids to nurseries this year.

When the method is commercialized, a company would probably offer the treated bulbils or small bulbs to nurseries that would in turn produce potted plants or cut flowers for consumers, Roh said.

U.S. growers sold over 9 million potted lilies in 1988, at a wholesale value of over \$34 million and an average wholesale price of about \$4 per pot, according to USDA statistics. Figures for 1989 are expected to be available later this month. The U.S. imported in 1988, primarily from the Netherlands, over 37 million lily bulbs at a cost of over \$7 million.

Doris Sanchez (301) 344-2767  
Issued April 10, 1990

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## **USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES**

WASHINGTON, April 10—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 9.31 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 8.25 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 8.14 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.66 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$5.75 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$5.17 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$4.98 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made April 17 at 3 p.m. EDT, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-7923

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USDA RELEASES COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR FEBRUARY

WASHINGTON, April 10—Here is the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s monthly update of the weekly cost of food at home for February 1990:

Cost of food at home for a week in February 1990

	-----Food plans----- (In Dollars)			
	Thrifty	Low- cost	Moderate cost	Liberal
Families:				
Family of 2 (20-50 years)	47.70	60.60	74.70	93.20
Family of 2 (51 years and over)	45.20	58.30	71.90	85.90
Family of 4 with preschool children	69.40	87.00	106.30	130.70
Family of 4 with elemen- tary schoolchildren	79.50	102.10	127.60	153.90
Individuals in four-person families:				
Children:				
1-2 years	12.50	15.30	17.80	21.50
3-5 years	13.50	16.60	20.60	24.50
6-8 years	16.50	22.00	27.50	32.10
9-11 years	19.60	25.00	32.20	37.10
Females:				
12-19 years	20.50	24.70	29.90	36.20
20-50 years	20.70	25.80	31.40	40.50
51 and over	20.50	25.20	31.20	37.10



USDA's Human Nutrition Information Service computes the cost of food at home for four food plans—thrifty, low-cost, moderate-cost, and liberal.

Dr. James T. Heimbach, acting administrator of the Human Nutrition Information Service, said the plans consist of foods that provide well-balanced meals and snacks for a week.

In computing the costs, USDA assumes all food is bought at the store and prepared at home. Costs do not include alcoholic beverages, pet food, soap, cigarettes, paper goods, and other nonfood items bought at the store.

“USDA costs are only guides to spending,” Heimbach said. “Families may spend more or less, depending on such factors as where they buy their food, how carefully they plan and buy, whether some food is produced at home, what foods the family likes, and how much food is prepared at home.

“Most families will find the moderate-cost or low-cost plan suitable,” he said. “The thrifty plan, which USDA uses to set the coupon allotment in the food stamp program, is for families who have tighter budgets. Families with unlimited resources might use the liberal plan.”

To use the chart to estimate your family's food costs:

—For members eating all meals at home—or carried from home—use the amounts shown in the chart.

—For members eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent from the amount shown for each meal not eaten at home. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent, or one-fourth the cost shown.

—For guests, add 5 percent of the amount shown for the proper age group for each meal.

Costs in the second part of the chart are for individuals in four-person families. If your family has more or less than four, total the “individual” figures and make these adjustments, because larger families tend to buy and use food more economically than smaller ones:

—For a one-person family, add 20 percent.

—For a two-person family, add 10 percent.

—For a three-person family, add 5 percent.

—For a five or six-person family, subtract 5 percent.

—For a family of seven or more, subtract 10 percent.



Details of the four family food plans are available from the Nutrition Education Division, HNIS, USDA, Federal Building, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Johna Pierce (301) 436-8617

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## **GENE RESEARCH BOOSTS TRITICALE, A MAN-MADE GRAIN CROP, FOR 21ST CENTURY**

WASHINGTON—Newly discovered genes could help triticale, a century-old hybrid of wheat and rye, become a 21st-century staple in bread and other foods, said a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist. The new genes, originally from wheat, allow triticale plants to tolerate high levels of aluminum naturally present in many soils, said plant geneticist J. Perry Gustafson.

An estimated 25 percent of the world's soils may induce metal stress in plants, Gustafson said. In terms of area affected, "aluminum is the number one metal toxicity problem."

"The genes we found may enhance an already bright future for triticale as a low-cost, sustainable alternative to classical farming on marginal soils," said Gustafson, of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

"These soils may be needed more in the next century to grow food for burgeoning populations in a world also faced with possible climate change."

At the ARS Cereal Genetics Research Laboratory in Columbia, Mo., he and biology technician Kathleen M. Ross found that genes on 12 "chromosome arms" of wheat enhance the ability of wheat-rye crosses to withstand high levels of acid and aluminum. Wheat has 14 pairs of chromosomes, each with two arms containing hereditary material, DNA, in the nucleus of each cell.

He said putting aluminum-tolerance genes into new triticale varieties could cut farmers' grain production costs in the eastern United States, particularly the Southeast. This region has more than 200 million acres on which farmers must add lime to reduce the soil's acidity and crop plants' uptake of aluminum. "As the need for marginal land increases, growing triticale that's adapted to stress may be a better alternative than using lime, fertilizer and irrigation to adapt soils to suit crops," Gustafson said.

Conventional breeding of aluminum-tolerant triticale “may be complicated by many genes that affect expression of other genes,” he cautioned. For example, he found that genes on six chromosome arms of a wheat variety, Chinese Spring, thwarted the expression of aluminum tolerance by rye genes placed in this wheat. On the other hand, some aluminum-tolerance genes are on the same arm as genes associated with flour qualities that make bread dough rise well. Finding out if and how one gene affects another lays the groundwork for bioengineering selected genes into plants of the future, he said.

Triticale is grown on about 1.2 million acres in Poland and 1.8 million acres elsewhere, including some 120,000 acres in the United States. The grain is fed mostly to livestock. But Gustafson said bread made from triticale flour is tasty, with a slightly nutty flavor. The flour is used in Frenchstyle bread in Brazil and in pancake mixes and crackers sold in some specialty stores in the U.S. Today’s baking technology and consumer habits are oriented to wheat flour, but he said triticale’s economic potential for foods may become increasingly obvious as high-yielding varieties become more widely grown. Some varieties yield up to 30 percent more than wheat on marginal lands, he added.

Gustafson contributed to a 1989 report on the crop by the National Research Council. The report noted that triticale thrives on soils that are high in aluminum or boron, or are saline, sandy, acidic, alkaline, cold, infertile, dry or mineral deficient.

Ben Hardin (309) 685-4011

Issued: April 11, 1990

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## **USDA DECIDES FOUR ANIMAL WELFARE ACT COMPLIANCE CASES**

WASHINGTON, April 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture settled four cases during February to enforce the humane care and treatment of animals regulated under the Animal Welfare Act.

James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said the cases resulted from earlier charges. Details are:



—Gus White, III, doing business as Exotic Animal Orphanage in Collins, Miss., had his federal animal exhibitor's license suspended for 120 days following an appeal to the judicial officer. The judicial officer ruled that the evidence supported USDA allegations that Gus White and his wife, Betty White, operated the facility below required standards of the Animal Welfare Act. USDA charged that on at least eight occasions between Feb. 6, 1986, and Jan. 27, 1987, the Whites failed to comply with standards governing structural strength and maintenance of facilities; shelter for animals kept outside; sanitation, drainage and waste disposal; and protective fencing and safety barriers for wild animals. In addition to the suspension, the judge ordered the Whites to cease and desist from any future violations of the act. Also, they were assessed a \$1,000 civil penalty which was suspended provided that they bring their facility in full compliance with the act and refrain from any violations within a five-year period.

—E. Lee Cox and Becky Cox, doing business as Pixy Pals Kennels in Stratton, Neb., were ordered to cease and desist from future violations of the Animal Welfare Act, and to pay a \$12,000 civil penalty following an appeal to the judicial officer. The Coxes were also ordered to suspend their business operation for 90 days, effective March 7, or until their kennel is in full compliance with federal regulations. The judicial officer ruled that the evidence supported USDA charges that during the period between March 19 and Dec. 8, 1985, the Coxes falsified their business records, failed to hold dogs for at least five business days after acquisition, offered underage puppies for transportation and on Jan. 27, 1988, refused to permit an APHIS official access to inspect their facility and records. The Coxes have appealed the decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals. The suspension and civil penalty have been stayed pending the outcome of their appeal.

—Raden Keene, Jr., doing business as Meadowville Kennels in Salem, Mo., has agreed to the issuance of an order by an administrative law judge to cease and desist from future violations of the Animal Welfare Act and, in particular, to cease from operating without a federal animal dealer's license. Also, he agreed to pay a \$2,000 civil penalty and refrain from engaging in any business capacity that requires a license under the act.

—Willard M. Lambert and Victoria Frankiewicz of Cherokee, N.C., were each ordered by an administrative law judge to cease and desist from future violations of the Animal Welfare Act and, in particular, to



cease from operating without a federal animal exhibitor's license. Also, Lambert and Frankiewicz were each assessed a \$3,000 civil penalty and were disqualified from applying for an exhibitor's license for 10 years. Furthermore, they must sell or otherwise legally dispose of the bear used in their exhibit no later than May 23, and they may not own or maintain any wild animal in captivity during the disqualification period. The monetary penalty is suspended so long as Lambert and Frankiewicz comply with all terms of the decision and order.

USDA alleged that between June 18, 1987, and June 30, 1988, Lambert and Frankiewicz exhibited a black bear without having the required license. Other alleged violations cited were that the housing facility for the bear was not structurally sound and maintained in good repair, animal food and bedding supplies were not properly stored, the primary enclosure was not kept clean and the exterior premises was not kept clean and free of trash.

Standards for the care and treatment of certain animals have been required by the Animal Welfare Act since 1966. Animals protected by the law must be provided adequate housing, handling, sanitation, food, water, transportation, veterinary care and protection against extremes of weather and temperature. The law covers animals that are sold as pets at the wholesale level, or are used for biomedical research or for exhibition purposes.

USDA enforces the act primarily through administrative prosecutions. Many of these cases are resolved through the consent decision provisions of the regulations. Under these provisions, USDA and the respondent named in the complaint agree to a stipulated order and penalties. If the case is not settled, there is a hearing before an administrative law judge who issues a decision. Any party may appeal the administrative law judge's decision to the USDA's judicial officer. The respondent may appeal an adverse decision by the judicial officer to the U.S. Court of Appeals. Failure to respond to the charges in the complaint results in the issuance of a default order assessing penalties.

Dealers, breeders, brokers, transportation companies, exhibitors and research facilities must be licensed or registered. USDA personnel make periodic, unannounced inspections to help assure compliance. Action is

taken against violators after efforts to secure compliance are unsuccessful, Glosser said.

Questa Glenn (301) 436-7799

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## **PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR USSR**

WASHINGTON, April 11—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 100,000 metric tons of hard red winter wheat for delivery to the USSR during the 1989-90 marketing year and under the seventh year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement signed Aug. 25, 1983 and extended Nov. 28, 1988.

The marketing year for wheat began June 1.

Sales of wheat and corn to the USSR for delivery during the seventh year of the agreement (which began Oct. 1, 1989 and ends Sept. 30, 1990) total 15,630,500 tons, of which wheat is 2,910,000 tons and corn is 12,720,500 tons. Sales of soybeans total 288,400 tons and soybean meal total 1,407,000 tons. In addition, sales of barley total 7,300 tons.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

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## **USDA/HHS TO ESTABLISH RURAL HEALTH INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE**

WASHINGTON, April 12—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Library and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have agreed to cooperate in establishing a new health service to provide information to help small communities deal with health care problems.



The service, which is within NAL's Rural Information Center, will be known as the Rural Information Center Health Service (RICHS). Health information will be available toll-free through an 800 telephone number.

"HHS approached us with a proposal to operate RICHS because NAL's Rural Information Center already has strong connections with rural America and an excellent reputation," said NAL Director Joseph Howard. "The idea is to piggy-back on the services offered by the Rural Information Center to bring important health information to rural communities in the United States."

As outlined in section 711 of the Social Security Act, which authorizes the rural health information service, RICHS will be a clearinghouse "for collecting and disseminating information on rural health care issues, research findings relating to rural health care and innovative approaches to the delivery of health care in rural areas."

To establish RICHS, HHS has agreed to transfer funds totaling \$900,000 to NAL over the next three fiscal years.

NAL's Rural Information Center is one of 15 information centers established by the library to provide enhanced information services on issues of importance to the agricultural community. Subjects covered by the centers include agricultural trade, alternative farming systems, biotechnology, and food and nutrition, among others.

NAL is the foremost agricultural library in the world, containing over two million volumes and receiving 26,000 periodicals. With the Library of Congress and the National Library of Medicine, NAL is one of three national libraries of the United States.

Brian Norris (301) 344-3778

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## **USDA ANNOUNCES ESTIMATED 1989 WOOL AND MOHAIR PAYMENTS**

WASHINGTON, April 12—The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that wool producers will receive about \$50 million in 1989 marketing year price support payments on shorn and pulled wool; mohair producers will also receive about \$50 million in price support payments. Payments are to begin April 12.



The 1989 support price for shorn wool is \$1.77 per pound, determined in accordance with the National Wool Act of 1954, as amended. The 1989 national average market price for shorn wool, \$1.24 per pound, was 53 cents less than the support price.

The 1989 shorn wool payment rate of 42.7 percent is the percentage which brings the average price received by all producers up to the support price. The payment rate will be applied to the net proceeds received by producers for shorn wool marketed during the marketing year.

The Wool Act provides that pulled wool shall be supported at a level comparable to the shorn wool support rate in order to maintain normal pulled wool marketing practices. Accordingly, producers will receive \$2.12 per hundredweight in price support payments for unshorn lambs that were sold or slaughtered during the 1989 marketing year.

For mohair, the 1989 average market price was \$1.58 and the support price is \$4.588 per pound, making the payment rate 190.4 percent.

Payments will not be made for producers' sales that are in excess of a maximum sales price per pound of wool or mohair which, for the 1989 marketing year, is \$4.96 per pound for wool and \$6.32 per pound for mohair.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206.

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## COMPOUND MAY BE NEW WEAPON AGAINST AFLATOXIN

WASHINGTON,—A compound used to prevent caking in animal feed may reduce levels of aflatoxin in the milk of animals eating contaminated grain, a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist has reported.

Aflatoxin is a naturally occurring toxic substance produced by several species of *Aspergillus* molds that infect seeds and nuts on growing plants and in storage.

“Very high levels of aflatoxin can cause acute poisoning and may cause liver cancer in humans, but in this country no such cases have been reported”, said USDA veterinary toxicologist Roger B. Harvey. “We have safeguards to make sure our food is wholesome.” For example, milk carries the Food and Drug Administration’s most stringent aflatoxin limit, no more than 0.5 part per billion—the proportionate equivalent of one half-inch in 16,000 miles.

Harvey works at the Veterinary Toxicology and Entomology Laboratory operated by USDA's Agricultural Research Service at College Station, Texas. There and at Texas A&M University at College Station, he and other scientists have tested the anti-caking compound, hydrated sodium calcium aluminosilicate or HSCAS, against aflatoxin in dairy cows, dairy goats, chickens, pigs, turkeys and sheep.

In one test, three dairy cows ate feed with 200 parts per billion of aflatoxin, and aflatoxin levels in their milk were measured. The cows then were fed a diet including both aflatoxin and 0.5 percent HSCAS. Aflatoxin levels in the cows' milk dropped 20 to 47 percent—from the measured 1.0 down to 0.8 parts per billion in one cow, from 2.1 ppb to 1.1 ppb in the second cow, and from 2.6 ppb to 1.8 ppb in the third cow.

Harvey said the 200 ppb of aflatoxin used in the test was higher than cows realistically are likely to encounter. Federal regulations limit aflatoxin levels in mixed feed for dairy cattle to no more than 20 ppb.

However, other parts of the world do not have such stringent guidelines, Harvey noted, so the findings regarding the usefulness of HSCAS against high levels of aflatoxin could have worldwide implications in helping ensure a wholesome supply of dairy products.

"More extensive tests are needed, but the findings are significant, particularly since this is one of the few instances where you find an antidote that appears to be specific for a single toxin," Harvey said.

When fed to chickens or pigs, the anti-caking compound appeared to bind aflatoxin in the animals' intestinal tracts so the toxin passed harmlessly through their bodies, he added.

Jane F. Robens, ARS National Program Leader for Food Safety and Health, described HSCAS as a "hopeful beginning in the development of technology that will afford practical aflatoxin control methods for producers."

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089

Issued: April 12, 1990

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## USDA ANNOUNCES 1990 FLUE-CURED TOBACCO GRADE SUPPORT RATES

WASHINGTON, April 12—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced grade loan rates for the 1990 crop of flue-cured tobacco, based on the price support level of \$1.488 per pound.

The loan rates range from \$1.00 to \$1.92 per pound for the 1990 crop. For the 1989 crop, the price support level was \$1.468 per pound and the loan rates ranged from \$1.01 to \$1.92 per pound.

The Flue-Cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corporation will deduct one cent per pound from the grade loan rates for administrative overhead cost.

Loans are not available on flue-cured tobacco identified by a 1990 Tobacco Marketing Card bearing the notation “No Price Support”, or “Discount Variety - No Price Support” or “Discount Variety - Limited Price Support.” For tobacco identified by a 1990 Tobacco Marketing Card bearing the notation “Discount Variety - Limited Support”, the applicable rates are one-half of the rates quoted in the schedule, plus fifty cents per hundred pounds. Any grade to which the special factor “sand” or “dirt” is added (denoting a moderate amount of sand or dirt in excess of normal) may be accepted at 90 percent, rounded to the nearest cent of the rate listed in the attached schedule.

Additionally, loans are unavailable on tobacco graded P5L, P5F, P5G, N1L, N1GL, N1XL, N1XO, N1PO, NO-G (no grade), N2 (second quality nondescript), W (doubtful keeping order), U (unsound) or scrap. However, marketings of these low grades will be charged against the quotas of the farms on which they were produced.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206.

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